REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action that was mailed on December 19, 2005. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indicated allowability of claim 3-5. Claim 1 is amended to incorporate the recitation of allowable claim 3, and claim 3 is accordingly cancelled, without prejudice. New claim 15 is based upon disclosure in the specification, page 9, line 28 – page 10, line 3 and page 11, lines 11-17. New claim 16 is based upon disclosure in the specification, page 11, lines 11-17 and page 20, lines 17-19. New claim 17 is based upon disclosure in lines 19-25 on page 28 of the specification. Claim 13 is amended based upon disclosure in lines 14-23 on page 29 of the specification. New claim 14 is based upon original claim 13. No new matter is introduced by this Amendment. Claims 1, 2, and 4-17 are pending in the application.

Claims 1, 2, and 9-13 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by US 6,372,355 B1 (Noda). Claims 6-8 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Noda in view of US 2002/0091197 A1 (Nakamura). In as much as independent claim 1 – the sole independent claim in the application – now recites the feature of non-rejected original claim 3, these rejections do not apply to any of the claims currently pending in the application. An early notice of allowance is respectfully solicited.

If there are any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact Richard Gallagher, Registration No. 28,781, at (703) 205-8008.

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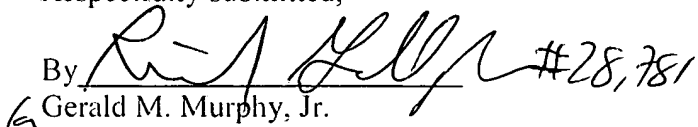
Respectfully submitted,

By  #28,781
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